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ABSTRACT

A study examined the behaviors exhibited by 17 teacher trainees with elementary school pupils identified as having special learning problems. These teacher student relationships were examined during a twice-weekly practicum and one full week of full-responsibility teaching. The trainees provided self-report data on specified behaviors and open-ended data on feelings, successes, and problems. The trainees were observed during the course of the study, their teaching behaviors and interactions were assessed, and their planning and assessment strategies were monitored by the investigator and an independent observer. Summaries are provided of various techniques used by the trainees in their attempts to enhance the academic achievement of exceptional students. A description is given of the settings in which the trainees worked, the kinds of handicapping conditions they dealt with, and the specific planning requirements they were asked to meet. Extensive quotations from the participants are used to highlight the problems they faced, how they dealt with them, their feelings about their relationships with the pupils, and their interpretations of successes and failures. A discussion of the findings includes suggestions for future research.
(JD)

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TEACHER TRAINEE BEHAVIORS
IN MAINSTREAMED CLASSROOMS
DURING AN EXTENSIVE PRE-STUDENT
TEACHING PRACTICUM

by

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TEACHER TRAINEE BEHAVIORS IN MAINSTREAMED CLASSROOMS

Introduction

Every teacher enjoys the pleasure of working with children who learn quickly and easily. However, the frustration, anxiety and concern that children being mainstreamed exhibit often reads to the teacher. Teachers often cannot deal with students exhibiting differing learning styles. All of us have felt frustration, anxiety, anger, or depression in many instructional settings. Working with handicapped children can cause these same feelings in well-meaning and well-intentioned teachers. All of us know the feeling of joy and pleasure that comes when one child is able to accomplish a difficult task. As teachers, we are often as excited as the children when a goal is reached.

Teachers sometimes do not provide adequate instruction to children with learning problems. The teachers are interested, concerned, and skilled, but, because they often lack the technical skills to deal with learning problems, they are not successful. Teachers have tried many techniques, explored possible solutions, and yet continue to feel frustrated. In-service training has sought to help them deal with the social-emotional aspect of mainstreamed handicapped children. The whole effort of mainstreaming has caused a massive retraining effort for many classroom teachers.

Mainstreaming has also caused revisions in teacher education programs in colleges and universities across the nation. The Specialized Training of Regular Educators Grant is an extensive, nation-wide effort to improve the training of pre-service teachers to meet the needs of handicapped students. In many cases, new courses have been specifically designed to help teachers in training learn about handicapping conditions, to gather information about referral agencies, and to hear from experts in the field. However, specific techniques for working with handicapped youngsters are often not given. Rather, general procedures and strategies are put forward that really do not prepare the young trainee to function in the classroom with real children.

The elementary teacher education program at WOSC has stressed teaching to individual children's needs for many years. An extensive system to assess the performance of teacher trainees has been functional for a decade. Revision of course content to meet the demands of mainstreaming was quickly accomplished. A large amount of data has been generated on the interaction of teacher trainees at WOSC and children with learning problems. This research is an attempt to systematically collect, analyze, and interpret illustrative data from public school settings.

Research Focus

This research reports activities of teacher trainees from WOSC in public school classrooms. Their efforts to meet the needs of mainstreamed pupils and others are documented. Longitudinal data of teaching pupils having individual educational programs on file was the primary purpose of the study. Open-ended data was also obtained on teacher-trainee's feelings and reactions to working with the handicapped students. Specific behaviors they used in their teaching of handicapped learners were identified and recorded. Specific research questions addressed by this research were:

1. How do teachers, in training, deal with the mainstreamed-handicapped learner as viewed by themselves and a trained observer?
2. How do teachers in training feel about their instruction and interpersonal interactions with mainstreamed-handicapped children?
3. Do the behaviors of teachers in training in mainstreamed classrooms change over a two term sequence of intensive practicum experience?
4. What are the differences in teacher-training behaviors between those with extensive experience with the handicapped and those with a minimal background of working with the handicapped.

Data Collection

Data for this study was collected through the efforts of the involved teacher-training students. A summary form was prepared (See Appendix). This form was completed each week by the students. Information on the classroom setting, the types of handicaps, the number of students, the planning behaviors, instructional behaviors, and interpersonal behaviors were listed. Students were to respond if they had done those things. Students were oriented as to what the program would involve, as were their cooperating public school teachers in Salem. The forms were collected each week for the investigator. The data was then summarized. This data was collected for two terms and the culmination of the two-term sequence was an entire week of full-responsibility teaching. During this week, each college student was responsible for the planning, the instruction, and the assessment of pupil learning. Specific observations to assess the teaching behavior were conducted. The investigator and a trained-independent observer visited each classroom and took observational data of the behavior of the teacher-trainee. All seventeen students were observed during their full week of teaching. The observations were summarized on the form used by the students to report data. Students, at the conclusion of this experience, were also asked to submit a summary stating:

1. Their overall reaction to working with the handicapped youngsters.
2. Their overall feelings of accomplishment and if possible to demonstrate what it was the handicapped youngsters accomplished.

Information on student attitudes was also collected prior to the research study. An attitude scale, developed by Dr. Jerry Girod of the Elementary Education Department was used.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SETTING

All students at WOSC have many responsibilities as they progress through the pre-student teaching experience. They engage in a variety of informal and formal teaching experiences over the course of two terms in a public school classroom. Planning skills, performing instructional functions, and the evaluation of children's learning are carefully monitored and assessed by both the public school and the college instructional staff. Students must demonstrate competence in the above areas if they are to advance to student teaching. In addition, all students are required to take a special course entitled "Identification of Learning Problems". This course is intended to give them background strategies and the specific techniques for working with a variety of handicapped youngsters. Specific topics presented by specialists from special education and related fields include:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Hearing Impaired | 7. Behavioral Disorders |
| 2. Physical Handicaps and Health Impaired | 8. Culturally Different |
| 3. Slow Learners | 9. Educationally Able |
| 4. Visually Impaired | 10. Emotional Disorders |
| 5. Speech Impaired | 11. Child Abuse |
| 6. Learning Disabled | 12. Behavioral |

Theoretically, the knowledge and skill presented in this course and other professional courses are used by the student in their pre-student teaching practicum.

Since teaching competency at WOSC is defined as the "ability to bring about desired learning in children", the ability to work with children of all types is inherent in this definition. In order to accomplish this, extensive experiences in school classrooms are necessary. Students, upon admission to the program, are assigned to a public school classroom two days a week. Each college faculty member is assigned 17 students to supervise in cooperation with the intensive supervision afforded by the public school classroom teacher. The college faculty are in the public schools with their students at least two days each week, and during the full week of teaching experience.

Student Sample

The students involved in this study have a wide variety of experience in working with handicapped children. They reported an involvement with handicapped learners of many types. Twelve of the 17 students reported an extensive, involved experience with handicapped individuals. The remainder had basically no experience in working with handicapped individuals. Many of the students in the sample had worked as work-study students in the Teaching Research program on the WOSC campus. Another had worked as an aide and a live-in staff-person in a group home in Salem. Two of the students have returned to school after working as counselors for the juvenile court system and working with a variety of individuals. Finally, one student has a background of teaching music in an elementary school where the handicapped children were mainstreamed into her music class. This illustrates, I believe, that the students had a wide readiness level or background level of working with the handicapped students. This would also, perhaps, explain the following data on the attitude exhibited by these students towards working with handicapped youngsters in the public school setting.

Attitude Data

The attitude scale developed by Dr. Jerry Girod was administered to the sample. The scores were averaged so that one descriptor of the group could be determined. The attitude scale describes individuals, and this group of students could be described (in terms of one single person) as:

1) You believe in the worth of this topic. 2) Your previous experience has effected you positively in holding that belief. 3) You expect to find pleasure in future work in this area. 4) You are confident that you can learn to be competent in this area. 5) You think of yourself as having a positive attitude toward this topic. 6) You are quite willing to be involved in working with or learning more about this topic in the future. 7) Though you may believe your prior experience has not been extensive you have had a moderate amount. 8) You are confident that you can become competent in this area if you have the opportunity.

Since this attitude measurement proved to be so positive, plans for a post assessment were dropped. There was not enough room for any significant upward movement.

The college students in the sample were fairly typical of students enrolled in the elementary education program at WOSC. This demographic data is summarized as follows:

Sex: Male - 4

Age: Range 20-42

Female - 13

Average 24.4

GPA: Range - 2.34-3.72

College Attendance

Average - 2.86

Post Baccalaureate - 3

1 or more years at a
community college - 7

At WOSC since freshman
year - 6

Public School Setting

The two elementary schools involved in this study are two of the many used for practicum experiences by WOSC students. They are different types of elementary schools. Mary Eyre Elementary is a newer facility with an outstanding media center and all the features you would expect to see in a modern elementary school. Salem Heights Elementary, on the other hand, is an older building on two levels. The building has had extensive remodeling over the years to make it a really functioning elementary school. Both schools, however, are characterized by a highly professional staff and aggressive leadership from the principal. Both schools have a dynamic curriculum that involves community experts and makes full advantage of the elementary block students that are assigned to their building.

Both buildings also have outstanding special education teachers functioning through the Resource Room. At Mary Eyre School, approximately 11 students are in the Resource Room and placed in a regular classroom periodically during the day. Salem Heights, although a smaller elementary school, has 11 students in the Resource Room also. Both schools have approximately 65 children on IEP (Individual Educational Programs) receiving services within the regular classroom. In all buildings there is careful screening prior to the IEP. The Resource Room Teacher functions as a consultant with the classroom teacher. The Child Development Specialist in each building is the key person in the administrative structure to insure that services are provided to these youngsters. The Salem School District has carefully planned procedures to implement mainstreaming. In both buildings, WOSC students were able to meet with key people periodically and really understand what it was that the Resource Room Teacher or the Child Development Specialist were trying to accomplish for the individual pupils. Many WOSC students had the opportunity to be directly involved with the Special Olympics. The handicapping conditions of children on IEP were, as would be expected in a sample of approximately 160 children, varied. Very few children were classified as visually impaired and hearing impaired, primarily because of the proximity of the state facilities. However, many children were identified as having behavior problems, learning disabilities, and being slow learners.

Presentation of Research Data

The focus of this research was to examine the behaviors exhibited by teacher trainees from Western Oregon State College with elementary pupils identified as having special learning problems. This interaction was examined during a twice-weekly practicum and one full week of full-responsibility teaching that is used as an assessment for advancement to student teaching. The college students provided self-report data on specified behaviors and open-ended data on feelings, successes, problems, etc. The students were observed during the course of this study; their teaching behaviors and interactions assessed, and their planning and assessment strategies were monitored by the investigator and an independent observer.

Planning for Instruction

Specific planning requirements for the pre-student teaching practicum pertaining to elementary pupils with special learning problems are:

- A. Objectives suitable for IEP pupil(s) characteristics.
- B. Planned activities, materials, and procedures reflect abilities of IEP pupil(s).
- C. Planned activities, materials, and procedures reflect interests of IEP pupil(s).
- D. Planned activities, materials, and procedures reflect feelings of IEP pupil(s).
- E. Assessment of procedures are appropriate to IEP pupil(s).
- F. Assessment materials are appropriate to IEP pupil(s).

Students were asked if they used an indicator 2 or more times a week (2 points), at least once (1 point), or not used (0). The weekly tabulation of this data is presented in the following table.

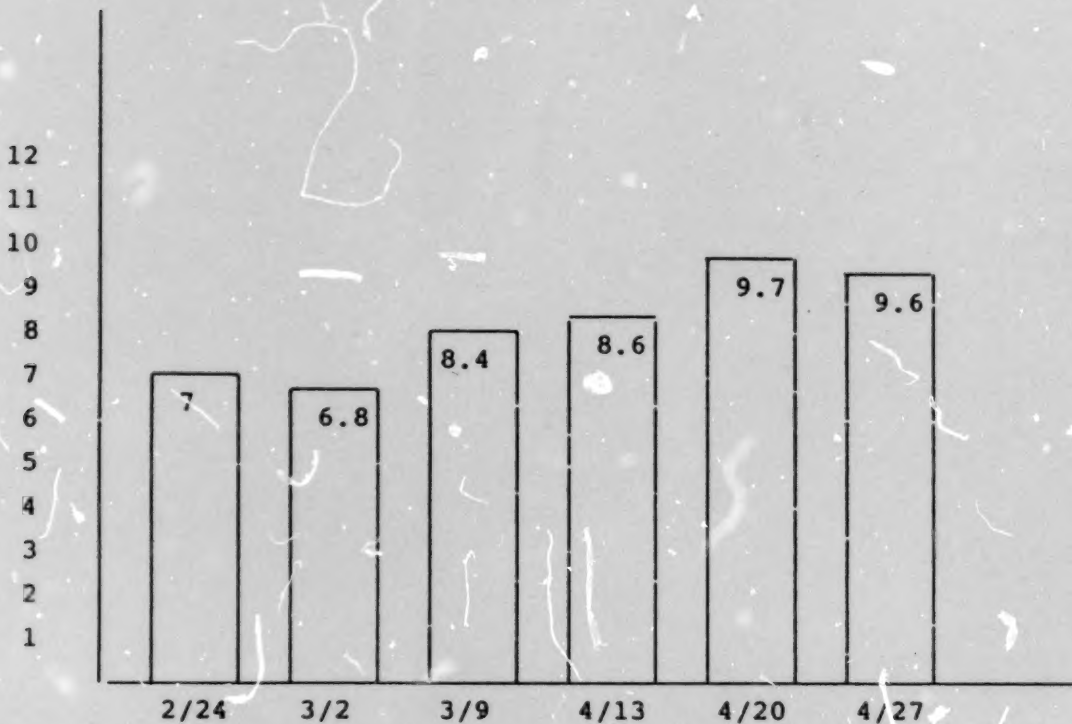


Table 1 - Planning for Instruction: Average Scores for Indicator statements, February - April as reported by students. (12 possible)

The data indicates students increased their planning effort to meet the needs of individual learners. All indicators were reported as having been used, and all students reported, at least once, they tried to adjust assessment procedures to IEP pupil(s).

Data collected during the week of full-responsibility teaching shows an even more dramatic use and attention to planning to meet the needs of special education.

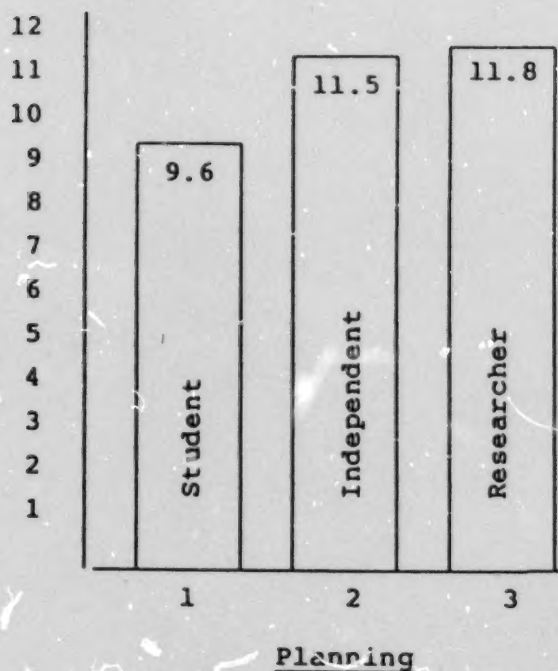


Table 2. Planning indicators used during week of full-responsibility teaching. (Reported by students (1), assessed by independent observer (2), and researcher (3) -- 12 possible.)

One explanation for the relatively high scores reported by the researcher and the observer is that the planning efforts of the student are carefully assessed during a conference preceeding the week of teaching. If the indicators are not readily observable, students are asked to explain, for example "... how will you assess John's work in art?" The data, very graphically, supports the statement that the students did plan very carefully to meet the needs of the children with special learning problems. Student comments included:

"... I tried to set special objectives for each child and structured the lessons to foster each child staying on task."

Another student stated:

"... In order to facilitate the learning for the IEP child, individual instruction or aid will be given after the lesson. Such as, after the class is given instruction I would go over to the various IEP students and talk over what I wanted them to do and give them specific directions, work a few examples together, and monitor them very closely. I will give a lot of positive reinforcement through touching the students on the shoulder, positive constructive comments and so on ... The only

special child I had in my classroom during the entire week kept up very well and completed all assignments with at least 80 percent accuracy. The only exception was spelling, where she received 75 percent on the unit test."

In summary, the students' careful planning appeared to result in some real successes in conducting instruction.

Conducting Instruction

Indicators assessed during the pre-student teaching practicum at WOSC include these specifically designated for pupils with special learning problems:

- A. Provisions made to link introductory activities to pupil's(s') understandings.
- B. Learning activities are linked to IEP pupil's(s') backgrounds.
- C. Pace of learning activities are adjusted to IEP pupil(s) response.
- D. Sequence of learning activities are adjusted to IEP pupil(s) response.
- E. Content of lesson adapted to foster on-task behavior of IEP pupil(s).
- F. Style of classroom management adapted to foster on-task behavior of IEP pupil(s).
- G. IEP pupil(s) indicate a reasonable degree of personal responsibility and independence in carrying out learning activities.
- H. IEP pupil(s) participate in learning activities.
- I. IEP pupil(s) contribute to learning activities.

The WOSC student self-report of these indicators is summarized in the following table. Again, a steady increase is noted in the use of these indicators at least once during their two days in the public school classroom.

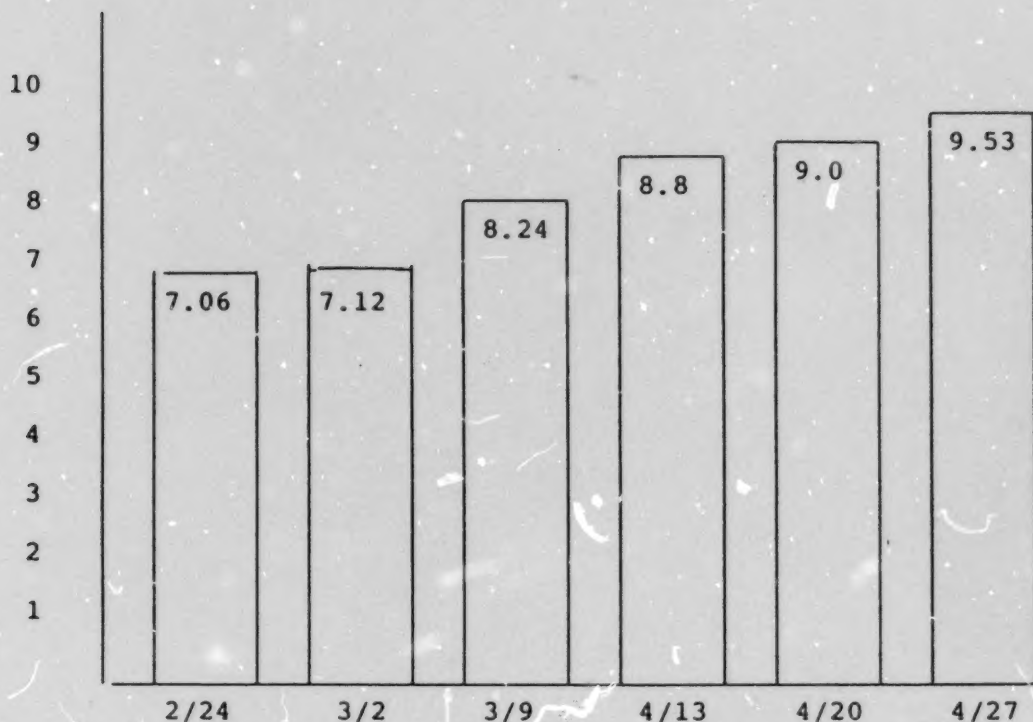


Table 3 - Conducting Instruction : Average scores for indicator statements. February 24 - April 27, as reported by students. (18 possible)

The students reported a variety of observations, insights, and practices related to working with mainstreamed and learning handicapped pupils. Some of their comments were:

"...I've reduced the number of spelling words required or the number of sentences to write for the handicap child."

"... My main adaptation seems to be the variation in a number of problems, spelling words, etc., that are required for students that are on IEP."

"...Reduced spelling list. Tried creative dramatics."

"...I'm getting in the habit of always reviewing before starting something new."

"...I'm becoming more aware of the necessity of adjusting the pace of learning activities when IEP students are in the room."

"...I searched for a way to keep [redacted] on task without giving her individual attention during group instruction. So used 'are we all on page 34?' phrases such as these. This reduced my need for feeling unable to keep her on task during group. If she did not complete, we scheduled one recess a day to complete work and set up individual reward system if she completes work in one day will graduate to allotted time. I have positive feelings she will gain some study skills for herself, not just for reward."

"...I felt good because [redacted] did the art project as the other children did. He was out of the room at the time, but when the helper came I explained to them both how to do the art project. He seemed excited. Gary had a good week and was very involved with all activities."

"...This week seemed to go really well. One IEP child, the slow learner I have in my class, seems to be participating quite well in the discussion on energy, he will raise his hand and comment on something. Today, he raised his hand and gave a correct answer to a worksheet. I was really excited and proud of him"

"...I was really pleased with one IEP child that is a slow learner. He successfully finger-painted two fish for the art lesson. He also did a great job of finger-painting, and stayed on task."

"...I'm discovering that the students with specific learning problems need more special attention and encouragement. Hopefully, the students will retain what they are learning from my teaching."

The above open-ended comments indicate a fairly high level of awareness and performance. It is important to remember that these were collected while the college student was only in the room two days a week. As the time grew near for the week of full-responsibility teaching, students became more aware of adaptations to instructional procedures that would help meet the needs of handicapped learners.

Data collected from students and observers during the full week of teaching is summarized in the following table.

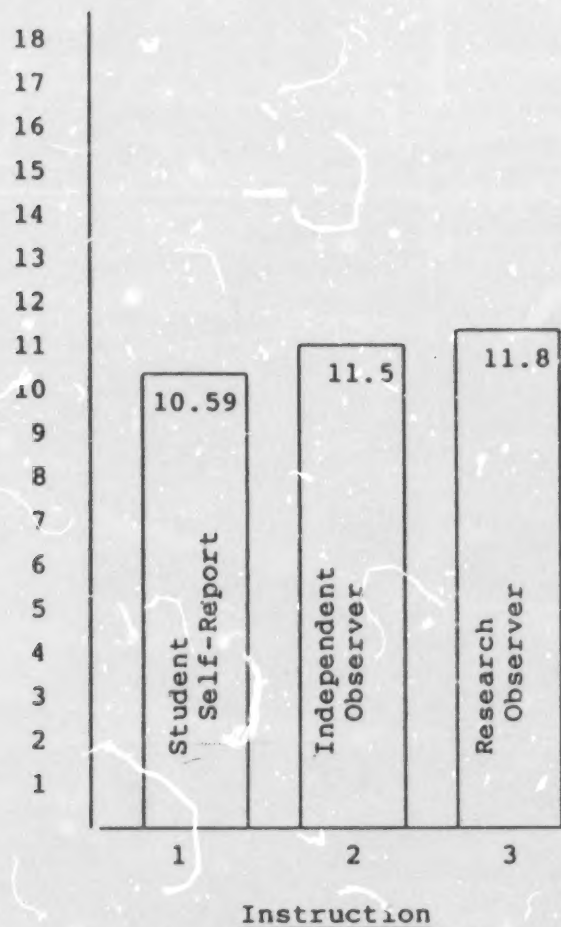


Table 4. - Instructional indicators reported by students (1), assessed by independent observer (2), and researcher (3) during five consecutive days of teaching. (18 possible)

The consistency of the three scores is perhaps a reflection of the time available to assess the student during a full week of teaching. There is more opportunity to schedule observations when a mainstreamed or IEP pupil is actually in the classroom. Observations and insights of the full week of teaching reported by the WOSC students included:

"...One thing I tried to do was to be real consistent with the IEP students. I began to realize how essential one-on-one interaction with them was. Two out of the three IEP's couldn't get a grasp on what exactly the task was unless I were to sit with them and do each one. Unfortunately, I couldn't give them a lot of this time, so I wasn't too surprised when they were unable to receive a

passing score. Another thing I realized is that it is so important to know your kids academically and emotionally before planning anything, be it outcomes, lessons, activities, or instructions. Throughout the week that lesson really hit home."

"...I found that the one-on-one interaction with the IEP's was very essential. They would become very frustrated when the success rate was so low. I also became frustrated when there wasn't enough time to work with the kids, but I did become more aware of their needs as the week progressed."

"...The mainstreamed boy, [REDACTED], tends to get very frustrated, so I find something for him to do quickly. I have color coded sheets ready quickly as the teacher suggested I do. As far as [REDACTED] is concerned, we condensed his assignment in to half so that he would be more successful. The two of us grew close since I made sure to give some extra special attention to him and to the other child in the classroom from the ERC. I felt that some of the activities were very well suited to the IEP students."

"...While working with my IEP children, I found many interesting facts. For example, my children work better when: 1) they had something tangible to work with, 2) they were reinforced positively more than three times in a half-hour period, 3) they were redirected more than two times; for example, helping them turn to their correct page, etc., 4) their neighbor or friend worked one-on-one with them like a team. Sometimes I became very frustrated because I was dealing with regular kids and special kids."

"...I tried to set special objectives for each child and structured the lessons to foster the child staying on task. The week went pretty well. I wish I would have had more individual time to work with the child."

Teaching behaviors noted by the two observers support the statement that the students were meeting the needs of pupils with special learning problems. Some listed observations include:

"...The student spent extra time with the IEP student to make sure she understood the lesson. The student felt free to go to the teacher with her questions and was obviously comfortable with her. The work was adjusted for the IEP student so that it was at a level she could handle easily. The room was organized in such a way that she could work one-on-one with all the students."

"... [redacted] did a nice job teaching this lesson. He slowed the pace and retaught a point when it was necessary and rechecked to make sure that everyone understood. He lead the students to find the pattern that was emerging from the math problems and let them discover the method of solution."

"...While the special learning problem child was in the room, [redacted] made a special effort to help him keep up with the class. I observed her in other situations and she is considerate of his feelings and tries to make him feel a real part of the class."

"... [redacted] spent extra time with the IEP student to make sure she understood the lesson. The students felt free to go to [redacted] with her questions and was obviously comfortable with her. The work was adjusted for the IEP students so that it was at a level she could handle easily. She had good control of the room and worked well one-on-one with all of the other students, not just the IEP students."

"... [redacted] spent a lot of time with the IEP student to make sure they understood the lesson. One of the students had trouble staying on task, and [redacted] stayed right on him to make sure the work was properly completed. There was no sense of the IEP students being singled out, and all the children seemed comfortable within the classroom. There was good board work, reinforcement when several students had similar problems or questions."

"... [redacted] is very comfortable with all the children and tries to meet their individual needs. The IEP pupil was having a hard time hearing and this was quickly and quietly remedied. Her lesson was well planned and taught with good sequence and enthusiasm. I liked her idea of putting words children couldn't spell on the board unless they were part of the weekly spelling list."

The data presented in Tables 3 and 4 together with the quotations from students clearly indicate that WOSC students are demonstrating their competence in dealing with the needs of mainstreamed elementary pupils and other pupils with special learning problems.

Individual Initiative Beyond That Required

One student pursued an independent program option of special individual study to improve a first grader's at-task behaviors. This first grader, in the process of being evaluated for a learning problem, was approved for the study by the school staff. Goals were established, a reward system instituted, and a record-keeping system involving the student were all part of the project. The first grader demonstrated improvement, but the real growth came from the teacher-trainee who stated:

"...I sure learned about data, both 'real' and non-verbal type. He did so many things I was proud of, and I feel my efforts kept him from just sitting at his desk doing literally nothing- he learned something, and he knew it! In short, this project really taught me one important aspect of teaching--be organized and have a definite goal in mind!

To further summarize student accomplishments and growing insights into individualizing instruction, another student said it this way:

"...During my STFR three of the students on IEP's were sitting at the same table and they would never get their work done on time. They would also have problems keeping up with the rest of the class. So, before I started my STFR I moved them so each was sitting at a different table. I also positioned them so they would be as close as possible to me while I was teaching. This has helped a great deal by enabling the students to work with much brighter, faster students. It also helps them to keep up with the rest of the class. I also positioned the girl with the hearing problem as close to me as possible. I always try to speak loudly and clearly to her. She doesn't receive any special therapy or instruction. I feel as though my presence in the classroom has really benefited these slow learners. Socially we are doing a lot to help IEP students. Unfortunately, educationally we don't seem to be helping them. When I see a boy close his books, push it away from himself, and lower his head and shoulders, I don't believe these are indicators of him learning. The only class that this boy enjoys is art. What I tried to do on an individual basis was give him examples using art. In English this worked with helping him understand adjectives. These students need more individual help, not just in the sacred cows, math and reading, but language art and social studies and so on. I have noticed that each of the IEP students have an area in which they function very well. For example, [redacted] is able to understand and function better in science. [redacted] is able to do very superior work in art class. I was able to take advantage of their knowledge in these subjects by giving them examples using art and science to explain things. Personally, I don't believe mainstreaming is helping these children. Teachers I observe aren't doing much to help them. I was told, 'We don't know what we are supposed to do with them and no one is telling us what we should be doing.' I question if we are really helping them socially. Almost every day I have seen these boys fail or copy someone's work or idea to keep from failing. They are being teased by students and teachers anyway, so maybe it might be better not to mainstream them. It might be better for them to be in a total IEP where the teacher will hopefully love and care about them."

Assessment of Pupil Learning

Two behaviors dealing with the assessment of pupil learning were assessed. They were:

- A. Procedures varied to meet needs of IEP pupil(s).
- B. Interpretations of subject mastery consistent with IEP pupil's(s) achievement level.

Since these competencies were carefully checked by both the classroom supervisor and the researcher, they averaged 3.0 to 3.4 during the period proceeding the week of full responsibility teaching. Students were required to design alternative ways to assess the special needs students.

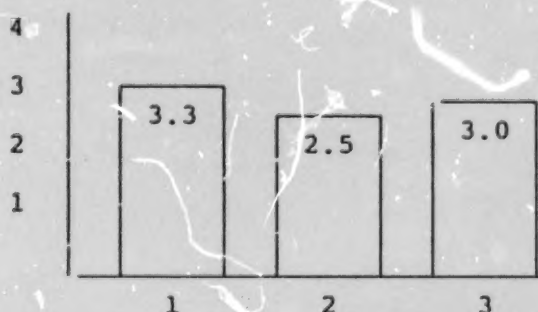


Table 5 - Assessment of Pupil Learning indicators as reported by students (1), independent observer (2), and researcher (3), (4 possible) during week of full-responsibility teaching.

Assessment strategies utilized by students were primarily reducing the number of problems, spelling words, sentences, and other response required to demonstrate mastery of an established objective. Variations in the mode of response were also used. Answering questions through selecting the correct picture, illustrating, labeling a chart with vocabulary words from the board, and manipulative devices in math were all used by the students.

The WOSC students did demonstrate the competency to assess learning outcomes for all students, and particularly for the pupils with special learning problems. As one student reported:

"...As for my health unit, my kids more than met the outcome stated. For the IEP students their average for the unit test was 85 percent and for the class average the score was 93 percent. I was so pleased and proud of myself and the kids. For the English unit the averages were a little lower. The IEP students had an average of 78 percent while the class average was 91 percent. This was the unit that the IEP's had a hard time with and also students who have behavioral problems got frustrated and acted up."

Interpersonal Relations

Perhaps the most important concern of a teacher in training is...how will I get along with kids, will I enjoy it, will I feel like a real teacher, etc. Teacher trainees, in particular, are expected to be sensitive to the needs of all their pupils, understand them, and interact with them in a timely manner. Specific indicators to assess this in this study were:

- A. Teacher-initiated interactions timely and sensitive to circumstances.
- B. Teacher responds to pupil-initiated interactions with sensitivity and understanding.

Students were asked to:

"...try to verbalize your feelings, reactions or whatever you felt (or feel) about your experiences this week. Try to zero in on attitudes, feelings of joy or frustration, success or its opposite."

The large number of students having previous and extensive involvement with handicapped learners has already been discussed. In addition, this group of WOSC students also exhibited a very positive attitude towards working with the handicapped. These findings are consistent with the self-report data:

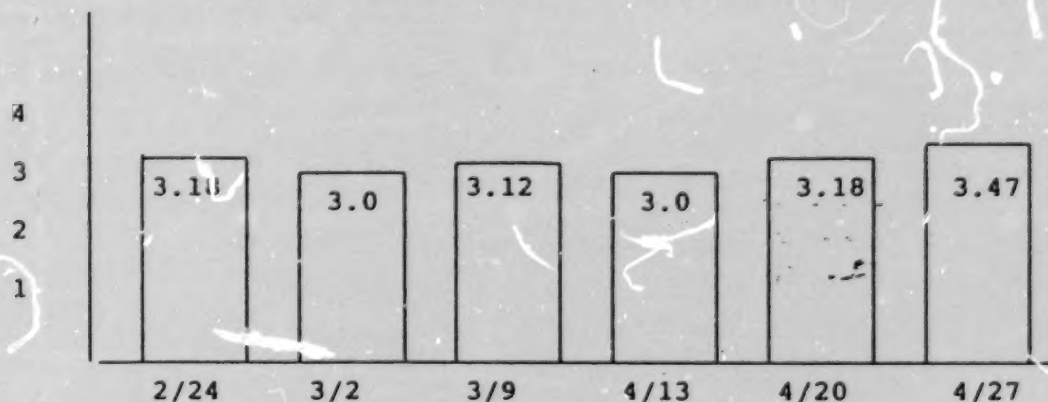


Table 6 - Interpersonal Relations. Average scores for indicator statements, February 24 - April 27, as reported by students. (4 possible)

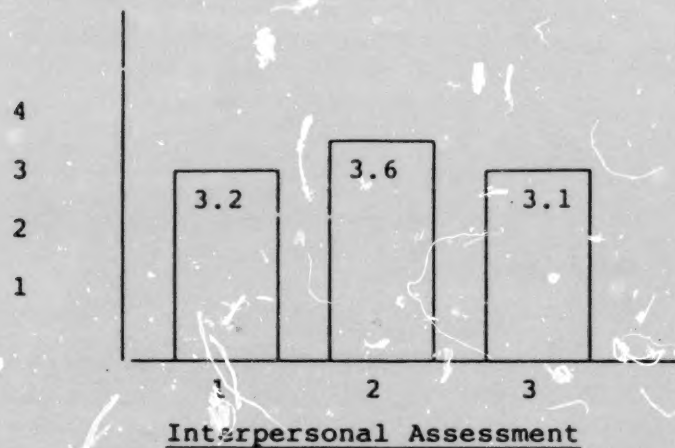


Table 7 - Comparisons of reported behaviors of (1) students, (2) independent observer, and (3) research observer during one week of full-responsibility teaching. (4 possible)

The open-end data during the weeks leading up to the full-responsibility week of teaching show some mature, insightful glimpses into the world of teaching--regardless of the setting in which it occurs. These comments also point up some of the on-going difficulties inherent in mainstreaming handicapped learners in regular classrooms. Illustrative comments pointing out frustrations are:

"...I was teaching an art lesson on paper mache' and I was having the children wrap their balloons in strips of paper that had been dunked in mixture. I was going around the room, helping children, and I came to who was learning disabled. He did not understand what was going on and he looked frustrated. I tried to help him with the project but I had 14 other students to look after. I became frustrated in trying to make him understand what he needed to do. The art lesson was too hard for him and he really needed an individual worker to keep him with it. I didn't have very good feelings about the art lesson for him, but, I was in a situation that I couldn't do anything about."

"...I feel frustrated with the time [redacted] wastes just sitting in the home room to get his 50% home room time in. ' [redacted] is so behind that he sits and stares.' ' [redacted] , on the other hand, participates with the others."

"...There are some frustrations due to the fact that some times teachers, as a whole, see a learning problem and they put the child in appropriate group level. But they overlook specific problems due to amount of children in the class."

"...I feel that the IEP students are either in the resource room or just sitting at their desks doing nothing or whatever they want. The teacher really doesn't require anything from them from the regular classroom. The things they are required to do are not spelled out too clearly for the students. My interaction with the IEP students is more of a caring and understanding rather than academic."

But, things were "better" in some of the settings:

"...It was a mixture of joy and frustration. I had all these big expectations for all the kids. And when they didn't meet my expectations, I felt like I had failed. But, the more I worked with a special child, the more I knew they could succeed."

"...I don't work with IEP students very often, only for one lesson this week, which went pretty good. [redacted] and [redacted] are joy to work with. They are so eager to do the same work as everyone else, and they try so hard."

"...I enjoy working with IEP children, they are special children."

"...It gave me great pleasure to see [redacted] and [redacted], both feel what it is like to do something right and get excited about a school task."

"...I have trouble finding things for [redacted] to do while in the home room. Most of his work is done in the resource room."

"...IEP students are really looked out for and taken care of in this classroom. The classroom teacher makes a lot of extra efforts to keep these children on task and interested in things. She also takes great effort in making sure they understand what's going on in the class."

"...I find most of my interpersonal relations with the IEP students are classified under encouragement. It seems that I spend a lot of time encouraging to complete assignments."

As the term progressed, the WOSC students became even more aware, understanding and realistic of the real world of the elementary classroom.

"... [redacted] spends most of her time in the resource room. However, when in the home room class, she reacts very well with the other students. During spelling, she takes a different spelling list which she chooses one person from the class to give to her. This works very well for her."

"...I personally feel that IEP students need to feel they can be successful. This sense of successfulness is drastically reduced when an IEP student is placed in their chronological age instead of mental age."

"...I really enjoy working with the students that are on IEP's. They are full of desire; are usually thoroughly motivated. I often find myself giving these children too much of my time. I need to learn how to give these children the help they need without using the other student's time."

"...As I progress further in the Block, I've had more experience when working with these kids, so I think I also have more of an understanding of them. This week was probably my most valuable experience so far. I'm not exactly sure if these kids have IEP's or not but they go to the special resource teacher for an hour or so. I seem to have a hard time with one child in particular, but I keep trying."

"...I am more strongly believing that mainstreaming in the written form is great, yet the real process of mainstreaming happening in our classroom has equal advantages and disadvantages."

"...I have found that commending the slow learner on tasks well done gives them a sense of pride and encourages good work. A handshake is very effective."

"...I love to work with IEP students. They are always so eager to learn and they try hard when working in the regular classroom. It can get frustrating at times for them, but they really put out the effort."

"...I have really felt like I have finally gotten through to [redacted] this week. His attitude seems much better and his work has really improved. His parents have been working with him at home, and I try to spend more time with him in the classroom."

The week of full-responsibility teaching was very interesting to both the students and the observers. In terms of the research focus of this study, however, one student succinctly stated one goal of the WOSC program. To quote:

"When I taught this full week, I could really tell the difference between helping IEP kids and ignoring them."

This statement points out that students are keenly aware of helping the pupils with special learning problems. They also feel confident and have demonstrated learning by the pupils.

Some comments from the observers highlighting the high level of positive interpersonal interactions in the classroom were:

"...The lesson was very well planned and taught. The children were asked to deduce their own conclusions. They did not have the solution handed to them. talked about working as a team, and had the children divide into groups. She stated before the lesson that she was trying to use the cooperative learning approach."

"...This was a well-prepared, well-taught lesson. [redacted] made sure she was in control of the class and had their attention before proceeding. She was well-organized and the lesson went very smoothly. She elicited good answers from the children and used positive reinforcement to encourage participation. I liked her method of having the children to think silently about their ideas before sharing them with the class. She worked well with the physically handicapped youngster who was in the classroom by making sure that he could handle the writing tasks easily."

"... [redacted] seems very comfortable with the children. She gives each one quality, individual attention. She is very natural with the special learning problem child insisting in a firm but gentle way that he work up to his potential. She took care to make sure he understood what to do and that he had the necessary materials to complete the task. She often complimented the children on their work and made them feel they were doing an outstanding job."

Interpersonal relations with students are hard to assess. Yet, the above feelings and perceptions reported by students and observers all tend to support the premise that WOSC students exhibit these interpersonal behaviors in their practicum setting. A final statement by the independent observer about one episode during the full week provides additional support.

"... [redacted] did a thorough job of reviewing for the health test, waiting until the IEP student was in the room and ready to go. She gave clear, concise directions and conducted a good oral test, repeating the questions and watching the pace. One IEP pupil came in for just

a minute on his way home. [REDACTED] made him feel very special in front of the class by sharing his work and good attitude. I'm sure that youngman went home with a very good feeling about his day and himself."

SUMMARY OF STUDY

Data has been presented in several forms. The data clearly indicates the answers to the research questions advanced in this study.

Discussion of Research Questions

1. How do teachers in training deal with the mainstreamed handicapped learner as viewed by themselves and a trained observer?

The data clearly indicates a high level of competence is used by WOSC teacher trainees when dealing with handicapped learners. Teacher trainees specifically planned to meet the needs of handicapped pupils; teacher trainees conducted appropriate instruction as established by the WOSC program; teacher trainees carefully and competently assessed pupil learning; and, teacher trainees were sensitive when interacting with the handicapped pupils.

2. How do teachers in training feel about their instructional and interpersonal dealings with mainstreamed handicapped children?

Teacher trainees at WOSC were very positive about their experiences with mainstreamed handicapped pupils.

3. Do the behaviors of teachers in training in mainstreamed classrooms change over a two term sequence of intensive practicum experience?

The assessed behaviors of the teacher trainees changed positively over the two terms of the study. They utilized more strategies and techniques to meet the needs of children in mainstreamed classrooms.

4. What are the differences in teacher trainee behaviors between those with extensive experience with the handicapped and those with minimal background?

This question was difficult to answer. Since only five students had less than a very extensive involvement and background of working with handicapped individuals, it was very difficult to discern meaningful differences. Both groups of students seemed to perform very well in the assessed variables.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study are really not surprising for several logical reasons. The indicators assessed have a long history of use. They have been the focus of research, in one form or another, for over a decade. The indicators are publicly stated, and carefully taught to each candidate in the elementary education curriculum at WOSC. Students are required to perform at a satisfactory level on each of the indicators as they progress from formal lesson teaching to the full week to student teaching. A careful review of their performance is made at each level by both public school and college personnel. Advancement to the next level is contingent on successful completion of the publicly stated prerequisites, i.e., the special indicators assessed in this study. In reality the program is a form of mastery learning in that satisfactory performance levels are carefully stated.

The program also uses some of the elements of the corrected self-test in spelling--deficiencies are noted, a strategy for correction is available, additional practice is utilized until the criterion level is achieved.

Suggested Future Research

1. Study should be replicated at two levels:
 - A. Utilizing a sample of WOSC student teachers.
 - B. Utilizing a sample of WOSC graduates in their first year of teaching.
2. The entire content of Education 473, Identification of Learning Problems should be thoroughly reviewed. The rationale for this statement is based on the surprising findings (or non-finding) that not one student mentioned this course as a source of help in dealing with mainstreamed children. Although not specifically requested, it is logical to assume that students would mention, orally or in submitted data, that they had used content from a course specifically designed to deal with knowledge pertaining to the handicapped.

APPENDIX

GUIDE TO SELF-REPORT FORM

You will complete the Self-Report Form, and turn it in to Dr. Koch each Friday morning. The form is designed to make it relatively painless for you to complete. Set aside a specific time each Thursday to record your activities or do this after Tuesday's lab experience. All data is confidential, and no one will be identified in any way. This activity has no effect on your grade.

Part I - Demographic Data

If there have been no changes from the previous week, state this and go on.

Parts II and III

These statements are the same as on the assessment instruments for the elementary education program. Simply check the appropriate column. Utilize the comment section if you wish to clarify your response. The final portion is an effort to gather information on your feelings and reactions. Be open, record what you feel. The following discussion and list of behaviors might assist you in deciding what to record.

The following "behaviors" are associated with any teacher-learner interaction. However, they seem to be especially crucial when working with children with special learning problems. The primary emphasis is on the interaction between the teacher and the learner. The entire areas of planning and assessment have been omitted from this project since they are assessed formally as a routine portion of the elementary teacher education program.

The following behaviors are not meant to replace those listed on the Self-Report Form. They are intended to assist you in your weekly reports. Many of them are perhaps stated in a different form on the Self-Report Form.

Did You:

1. Present assignments in a modified form to meet the needs of the SLP child.
2. Seat SLP children in the room based on their needs?
3. Utilize eye or physical contact to foster attentive behavior?
4. Obtain feedback systematically from students to periodically assess their knowledge/progress as the lesson progressed?
5. Provide activities within the lesson that enabled the SLP child to be successful?

Self-Report Form 2

6. Provide practice activities varied sufficiently to meet unique needs of the SLP child?
7. Make physical move or other action to a child to assess progress or insure understanding existed?
8. Provide feedback to SLP child that was positive, rewarding, and meaningful to the child?
9. Give positive strokes during the day or only during stroking period?
10. Listen to SLP child and deal with his/her concern?
11. Accomplish what you intended?
12. Modify your instruction based on feedback and/or observation of SLP children?

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**CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL LEARNING PROBLEMS
SELF-REPORT FORM**

Name

Date

I. Demographic Data

Students Taught

School _____

Grade _____

IEP CHILDREN: On the blank preceding each category write the first name only of each child who is on an IEP for that learning problem.

Others: On the lines following identify by the first name only each of the other children who have special learning problems but for whom no IEP has been prepared. (Consider issues such as: talented and gifted; culturally different; emotional or social problems; pronounced study habit problems; child abuse or neglect; etc.)

	First Name Only	Problem (Describe Very Briefly)
_____ Behavior Disordered	_____	_____
_____ Health Impaired	_____	_____
_____ Hearing Impaired	_____	_____
_____ Learning Disabled	_____	_____
_____ Physically Impaired	_____	_____
_____ Slow Learner (EMR or TMR)	_____	_____
_____ Vision Impaired	_____	_____
_____ Other (Describe _____)	_____	_____

First Week Only

State briefly your background of experiences in working with handicapped individuals _____

Special Learning Problems (SLP), including IEP students, reflect on your week in the classroom. Try to verbalize your feelings, reactions or whatever you felt (or feel) about your experiences this week. Try to identify your attitudes, feelings of joy or frustration, success or its opposite. Your comments may focus on one child or your situation in general.

II. Conducting Instruction

	Not Used - Inappropriate	Used At Least Once	Used Two or more Times	Comments
A. Provisions made to link introductory activities to pupil's(s') understandings.				
B. Learning activities are linked to SLP pupil's(s') backgrounds.				
C. Pace of learning activities are adjusted to SLP pupil(s) response.				
D. Sequence of learning activities are adjusted to SLP pupil(s) response.				
E. Content of Lesson adapted to foster on-task behavior of SLP pupil(s).				
F. Style of classroom management adapted to foster on-task behavior of SLP pupil(s).				
G. SLP pupil(s) indicate a reasonable degree of personal responsibility and independence in carrying out learning activities.				
H. SLP pupil(s) participate in learning activities.				
I. SLP pupil(s) contribute to learning activities.				

III. Interpersonal Relations

A. Teacher-initiated interactions timely and sensitive to circumstances.				
B. Teacher responds to pupil-initiated interactions with sensitivity and understanding.				